

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT L 00179 161728Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 SS-15 SP-02 INR-10 PA-01
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FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7302

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT LOUIS 0179

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, MP, US
SUBJECT: U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS INVOLVING MAURITIUS

REF: STATE 036385

1. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE THUS FAR "OVERLOADED THE CIRCUIT" WITH RESPECT TO USE OF MAURITIUS' PORT AND AIRFIELD FOR U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS. BUT WITH THE NUMBER OF FLIGHT CLEARANCE REQUESTS NOW PENDING WE MAY BE GETTING CLOSE TO OVERLOADING. WOULD BE BETTER IF FLIGHTS WERE SPACED OVER A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME, OR IF BURDEN WERE SHARED WITH OTHER POSSIBLE PLACES IN AREA SUCH AS REUNION AND SEYCHELLES.

2. WE DID FEEL, AND SO STATED (SEE PORT LOUIS 0085), THAT VISIT BY FOUR SHIPS SIMULTANEOUSLY AT PORT LOUIS OVER INDEPENDENCE DAY PERIOD WAS EXCESSIVE. OUR UNDERSTANDING NOW IS THAT THE FOUR SHIPS WILL VISIT IN PAIRS WITHOUT OVERLAP, WHICH SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT WITH GOM, AS THEY EARLIER APPROVED SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT, THOUGH WITH DIFFERENT DATES.

3. LATEST WORD FROM MMM HERE (PUBLISHED IN TODAY'S LE MILITANT) IS THAT CONFERENCE OF "PROGRESSIVE FORCES" ON INDIAN OCEAN
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DEMILITARIZATION HAS BEEN DELAYED UNTIL LATE APRIL. IN MAY CASE, IN VIEW OF FACT THAT SITE OF CONFERENCE WILL BE THE SEYCHELLES, WE DO NOT THINK AIRCRAFT VISITS HERE WHICH MIGHT COINCIDE WITH CONFERENCE WILL CAUSE US ANY PROBLEM.

4. WE DO NOT THINK IT NECESSARY FOR DEPARTMENT TO PRESS FOR RESCHEDULING OF ANY OF CURRENTLY PROPOSED MILITARY

UNIT VISITS.

5. ON REFLECTION WE THINK IT WOULD PROBABLY BE A MISTAKE TO OFFER SEAT ON VISITING AIRCRAFT FOR A GOM OBSERVER, UNLESS SUCH A SEAT CAN BE OFFERED ON EACH AND EVERY AIRCRAFT WHICH OPERATES FROM HERE. FOR ONCE WE MAKE SUCH AN OFFER, GOM WOULD TEND TO VIEW WITH SUSPICION A REQUEST FOR CLEARANCE WHICH DID NOT INCLUDE OFFER OF A SEAT FOR OBSERVER (AND SUSPICION WOULD BE WELL- FOUNDED THAT FLIGHT WAS A CLASSIFIED OPERATION). TO OUR KNOWLEDGE GOM HAS NEVER ASKED ABOUT SENDING AN OBSERVER, SO WE HAD PERHPAS BEST NOT RAISE THE QUESTION.
KEELEY

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